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42nd St., New York
Address: ACANP

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for
r. Albert Parry
itorial Consultants
obert Dell
rof. F. L. Schuman
eland Stowe
lendrik van Loon
ythe Williams

McWILLIAMS MAY FACE FEDERAL CHARGES

Non-Payment of Federal Tax and Misuse of Mails Involved

The Hour learns that Federal agents in New York are preparing charges against Joseph E. McWilliams, national commander of the Coughlinite Christian Mobilizers, on at least two specific counts. When asked for confirmation and further details of this information, officials of the U. S. Department of Justice in New York declined to comment.

The first count is believed to involve failure by McWilliams to pay Federal income tax on the sale of a patent to a nationally known razor manufacturing company for a large sum. The second count involves illegal use of the mails. The McWilliams case was one of two recently sent from Washington to U. S. Attorney in New York, John T. Cahill, for Grand Jury action. The other case concerns a German-American Bundster who, it is expected, will be charged with acting as an unregistered agent of a foreign power.

Bund-Mobilizer Merger Spoiled by Publicity

McWilliams has been quite open in his ties with the Bund's leader Fritz Kuhn and with the Bund itself. Recently plans were laid by G. Wilhelm Kunze, Kuhn's successor, to merge the Bund with the Mobilizers, the resulting organization to be known as the "National Unity Party," and to be headed nominally by McWilliams but actually by Kunze. However, the publicity given to these secret plans by The Hour (see our issue for December 23), as well as the impending governmental action against McWilliams, compelled the Bundsters and the Mobilizers to drop the scheme of merger as "too hot to handle," or at least to postpone it till a more favorable time.

The arrest of James Wheeler-Hill last week (foretold in our issue of December 9) jeopardized one more prominent Bundster and confused Kunze's plans. Of late, even the most adamant and optimistic Bundsters and Mobilizers are becoming convinced that further struggle under whatever camouflages may be wholly useless.

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MAYOR LA GUARDIA'S STATEMENT TO THE HOUR

Urges Vigilance in Dealing with Law-Breaking Anti-Semites

In a special statement to The Hour, Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia declared this week that his administration would jealously guard the constitutional rights of the people of New York City by continuing to investigate the activities of pro-fascist and anti-Semitic groups which attempt to spread intolerance and racial animosity.

The Mayor made clear that his office was persevering in its efforts to expose criminal methods of various anti-Semites who parade under the cloak of "Patriotic Americans." He urged greater alertness by the people of New York in registering their own complaints against soap-box speakers and disturbers of the peace rather than to depend upon the police department to originate all the complaints.

Cites Figures of Complaints and Arrests

"As you undoubtedly know," the Mayor told The Hour, "speakers cannot be prevented from mounting the platform. They may be held accountable only if their remarks run counter to the law. However, the records show that of the number of arrests of speakers thus far made, over 50 per cent were made on the complaint of the police." Pointing out that it was the responsibility of the public as much as it was that of the police, the Mayor said: "In the past six months the police have brought up for arraignment 238 cases of arrest or summons. Of these, 112 have resulted in convictions in the magistrate's court, carrying sentences of fine or imprisonment. Additional cases are scheduled for trial in the magistrate's courts."

The Mayor also stated that the vigilance of the police and of his own staff have been responsible for the unearthing of at least five cases where leaders of pro-fascist organizations arranging street meetings have been exposed as having criminal records. "These cases," he said, "have served to bring to light, in at least five instances, convictions for other crimes of some of the active participants at such meetings. The police will continue to make arrests and issue summonses for any further violations of the law."

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CHICAGO'S SILVER SHIRTS SENTENCED TO PENITENTIARY

"Dr." Maerz and Two Others Get Terms of One to Ten Years

On December 29, in Chicago, Judge John S. B. Arbaro of the Criminal Court sentenced three of the five Silver-Shirts on trial for window-smashing and swastika-painting in a Jewish-owned department store. The self-styled "Doctor" Homer Herman Maerz, 26 years old; Fred M. Pokorny, 36, and Douglas Campbell, 21, drew sentences of from one to ten years in the penitentiary each. This means that depending on good behavior and other



circumstances each of the three may serve anywhere from eleven months to three years. Charges against the two other defendants, George Heppner, 25, and Joseph Schimpf, 45, were dismissed.

Prosecutor Richard Devine stated that race hatred was the motive behind the window-breaking, which was done by the men as they were returning from a Silver-Shirt dance. The jury found the trio guilty of malicious mischief, the forewoman, Mrs. Margaret N. White, adding: "We all concluded that it was not a simple case of window-smashing." All five defendants admitted their membership in the Silver Shirt League of America as well as in the fascist Dearborn Crusaders. Their ties with the Nazi Bund and their allegiance to Father Coughlin were exposed in The Hour for October 28, November 4 and 25, and December 23.

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JOHN CECIL'S ALIEN-BAITING GROUP IN FINANCIAL STRAITS

The National Affairs Conference, John Cecil's fascist and alien-baiting organization (see The Hour for October 7), has of late encountered financial difficulties. The group has been forced to suspend publication of Conference Control Reports after printing but two issues, and it has moved from its office at 92 Liberty Street in the financial district of New York to a post-office box in the same locality.

Cecil, head of the unit, has resumed his speaking activities in behalf of several "super-patriotic" and Christian Front organizations. Among other feats he boasts of bringing Fritz Kuhn, the recently convicted Bundesfuhrer, as a guest to the luncheon at the Hotel Astor last May in honor of Senator Reynolds of North Carolina.

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MOBILIZERS BLAME CLEVELAND CRISIS ON ELEANOR ROOSEVELT AND REFUGEES

The recent food relief crisis in Cleveland, involving many thousands of destitute persons, is being utilized as material for anti-democratic, anti-Semitic propaganda by the Christian Mobilizers and other pro-fascist groups. At the various meetings of these organizations, the leaders are claiming that the influx of refugees to this country is responsible for the Cleveland situation, that Mrs. Roosevelt is the prime mover in bringing "undesirables" to American shores "to take food from honest Americans." The lie is being spread in other ways, too. Circulars are distributed with crude cartoons depicting Mrs. Roosevelt welcoming refugees at "First Class" gang planks, above which hang such signs as "Refugee Entrance"; underneath the cartoons are printed newspaper stories of the Cleveland situation and distorted quotations from a speech by Eleanor Roosevelt which expressed the sympathy of a Democracy for refugees.

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KLAN IN NEW JERSEY ADDS 1,250 MEMBERS IN ONE WEEK

Growth Claimed by Man Describing Himself as Grand Klokard of the State -- Leaflets Distributed and Crosses Burned

Some 1,250 new members were inducted last week into the ranks of the rejuvenated Ku Klux Klan of New Jersey, and the ceremony was accompanied by burnings of crosses in two towns of that state, Nutley and Westfield. The growth of the Jersey Klan was claimed by a man who, when apprehended for distributing the Klan's leaflets in Westfield without a permit, identified himself as the Reverend A. D. Bates. Clad in a green hood and cape, Bates said he was the Grand Klokard of New Jersey's Klan, office second only to that of Kleagle or chief leader. Two other Klansmen were held at the time for the same offense, but all three were released, with no charges brought against them. Bates also said that he was a retired minister of Nutley, N. J., but efforts to reach him in that hamlet for further questioning were of no avail, as no one seemed to know his whereabouts.

Five New Klaberns -- Contents of Leaflet

A reporter for The Hour had an interview with A. D. Bates at the time he was apprehended by the authorities for distributing the Klan's leaflets. Bates told our reporter that the Klan was reorganizing throughout the state of New Jersey, and that five new Klaberns or local chapters were dedicated in the course of last week alone. He added that 250 members were necessary to start a Klabern. He declared: "Twelve years ago the Klan removed its masks, but the masks are going back until we remove all isms from America. The Klan is not a political organization, but it intends to support certain office-seekers." Our reporter asked: "Office-seekers of what kind?" Bates replied vaguely: "Decent kind."

A more definite answer was found in the leaflet distributed by Bates and his henchmen. Of the familiar "white protestant" tone, the text read: "The Klan rides again, to keep America out of war, to protect our constitution, to retain our race integrity, to preserve Protestant patriotism, to fight Communistic activities, to make German-Americans, Italian-Americans, Polish-Americans, etc., just Americans. If you are White, Protestant, native-born of good repute, write Knights and Women of the Ku Klux Klan ..." (follows a post-office box address in Jersey City).

Plans for Present Campaign Laid Last Summer

We learn that the five new units, which Bates claimed in the interview, are located in South Amboy, Hackensack, Bergenfield, Middletown and Springdale Park. Recent cross burnings have occurred not only in Nutley and Westfield, but also in Roselle and Jersey City. The Jersey City Klan has been meeting since July, 1939, on the first and third Mondays of each month, at a certain public hall on Fairmount Avenue (the exact name and address are in the files of The Hour).

That the current campaign is not a spontaneous movement, may be seen from the statement made on December 15, 1938, by former Imperial Grand

Wizard Hiram W. Evans, to the effect that a Klan convention would be held in June of 1939 to start a vehement campaign on a nation-wide scale. It is since June, 1939, that the Klan has been riding with a renewed vengeance. That the Klan is still anti-Semitic, may be seen from the "No-Jews-Allowed" sign left at the scene of a recent cross burning in Mattituck, Long Island. The anti-Negro phase of the Klan continues as a matter of course; a leaflet, distributed in Jersey City on October 12, 1939, read: "Educate Protestant Americans to a full understanding of White supremacy versus Negro Equality." Catholics were attacked in the same leaflet by the use of the slogan "Protestantism versus Romanism."

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THE HOUR'S REPORT ON REICH RAILROADS BORNE OUT BY EVENTS

Accidents Since the War Bring to Mind Our August Report

An editorial entitled, "Things behind the lines don't appear too rosy," published in the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Gazette for December 24, reads:

"About the time the war broke out, one of the issues of The Hour, an anti-nazi propaganda sheet that comes to our desk periodically, contained a little piece about the deplorable state of the German railroads. Once regarded as among the most efficient and skillfully managed in the world, German rail service had gone to pieces under the supervision of bumptious, grafting nazi incompetents, the article said. In the event of the war, The Hour predicted, Germany would be seriously handicapped by inadequate transportation.

"At the time we didn't pay much attention to that. It had most of the earmarks of cooked-up propaganda ... But this recent series of disastrous train wrecks in Germany -- no less than ten of them since the war began less than four months ago -- puts a new light on the matter. So does the report that more than 100 fast trains have been removed from regular schedules in Germany because of heavy war freight, depreciated rolling stock, scarcity of equipment, and the like."

The article, mentioned in the editorial, appeared in our issue Number 8 for August 15, 1939. It was entitled, "German Railroads Totally Unprepared for War," and gave the gist of an interview which a representative of The Hour had been given by a high official of the German state railroads while on a trip to a neighboring country. We quoted the Reich official as follows: "We are getting ready for a war ... and yet the Nazi government has virtually neglected the needs of the railroads. We suffer from a terrific shortage of cars and locomotives. One of our main troubles is the inefficiency of our chiefs. ... Trains that are not cancelled are unbelievably crowded. Rails and cars and locomotives are worn out." He cited examples of inefficiency and corruption on the part of the Nazi chiefs, of disgust and sabotage on the part of non-Nazi railroad-men; he gave statistics of accidents, even then showing an alarming increase.

